GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:274
ANSWERED ON:23.02.2011
INCREASE IN BPL CARDS HOLDERS
Das Shri Bhakta Charan

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of BPL card holders has increased in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State/UT-wise;

(c) whether the Government has received any request from the State Governments for increasing the number of BPL families; and

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto along with the measures taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR PLANNING, PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY AND EARTH SCIENCES(DR. ASHWANI KUMAR)

(a)& (b): The Ministry of Rural Development provides financial and technical support to the States/UTs for conducting the BPL Census to identify the households living below the poverty line in the rural areas who could be targeted for getting the benefits under its programmes. The last BPL Census was conducted in 2002. States/UTs have identified 550.821 lakhs rural families as BPL under BPL Census 2002. Prior to 2002, BPL Census was conducted in 1997 under which 555.710 lakhs rural families were identified by States as BPL. State/UT wise details are given at Annexure-I. Results of BPL Census 1997 and 2002 are not comparable as both the surveys were conducted with different methodologies.

As guidelines issued for BPL census 2002 there was a ceiling on the number of BPL households to be identified in conformity with the poverty estimates of Planning Commission. The States were asked to identify the number of BPL families in such a manner that it should be equal to the Poverty Estimates of 1999-2000 or the Adjusted Share computed by the Planning Commission, whichever is higher. In addition, the States were given the flexibility of another 10% to account for the transient poor.

Presently, there is no uniform criteria for identification of persons below poverty line in urban areas. Planning Commission has constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. S.R.Hashim, to recommend suitable methodology for identifying BPL families in urban areas. The report of the Expert Group is expected to be submitted by May, 2011. The poverty line and poverty head count ratio in rural and urban areas as per Tendulkar Committee Report is given in Annexure-II.

(c) & (d) : The Government has received requests from a few States Governments to increase the ceiling for identification of BPL households. Expert Group headed by Dr. Suresh Tendhulkar has submitted its report and the same has been accepted by the Planning Commission.